United Nations A/56/L.45/Rev.1

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
10 December 2001
English
Original: English/Spanish

Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 44
The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Austria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Nicaragua, Panama and Sweden: revised draft resolution

The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

The General Assembly,

Considering the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolution 637 (1989) of 27 July 1989, and its own resolutions, particularly resolution 43/24 of 15 November 1988, in which it requests the Secretary-General to continue his good offices and to afford the fullest possible support to the Central American Governments in their efforts to achieve the objectives of peace, reconciliation, democracy, development and justice established in the agreement on "Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America" of 7 August 1987,[1]

Reaffirming its resolutions in which it recognizes and stresses the importance of international economic, financial and technical cooperation and assistance, both bilateral and multilateral, aimed at promoting economic and social development in the region with a view to furthering and supplementing the efforts of the Central American peoples and Governments to achieve peace and democratization, particularly resolution 52/169 G of 16 December 1997, concerning international assistance to and cooperation with the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America,[2] and the relevant resolutions concerning emergency assistance to

[1] A/42/521-S/19085, annex.
[2] A/49/580-S/1994/1217, annex I.

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the Central American countries, as a consequence of the destruction caused by natural disasters,

Emphasizing the importance of the development of the Central American Integration System, which has as its main objective the promotion of the integration process, the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America as the integrated programme for national and regional development, which contains the commitments and priorities of the countries of the area for the promotion of sustainable development, the establishment of the subsystem and of the regional social policy, the model of democratic Central American security, and the implementation of other agreements adopted at the presidential summit meetings, which taken together constitute the global frame of reference for consolidating peace, freedom, democracy and development and the basis for the promotion of mutually advantageous relations between Central America and the international community,

Recognizing the considerable success achieved in the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the Guatemala Peace Agreements, implementation of which is being verified by the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala,

Noting with concern the deterioration in the Central American economies, owing mainly to an unfavourable international economic climate and its negative effects on the efforts of the peoples and Governments of the region to achieve sustainable economic development,

Noting at the same time the delays in the fulfilment of some of the commitments contained in the Guatemala Peace Agreements, which has led the Commission to Follow up the Implementation of the Peace Agreements to reschedule its fulfilment for the period 2001-2004, and having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala and the recommendations contained therein[3] aimed at ensuring that the Mission is able to respond adequately to the demands of the peace process until December 2002,

Taking note with satisfaction of the successful implementation of the Peace Agreements and the continuous consolidation of the process of democratization in El Salvador, as a result of the efforts of its people and Government,

Recognizing with satisfaction the role played by the peacekeeping operations and observer and monitoring missions of the United Nations, which carried out successfully their mandate in Central America pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, respectively,

Recognizing with satisfaction also the organization and holding of general elections in 2001, in Nicaragua on 4 November and in Honduras on 25 November,

Emphasizing the importance of the end of a critical period in Central American history and the start of a new phase free from armed conflict, with freely elected Governments in each country and with political, economic, social and other changes which are creating a climate conducive to the promotion of economic growth and further progress towards the consolidation and further development of democratic, just and equitable societies,

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[3] A/56/391.

Noting that the Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction[4] was held in Nicaragua in September 2001,

Reaffirming that the consolidation and establishment of firm and lasting peace and democracy in Central America is a dynamic and ongoing process that faces serious structural challenges,

Stressing the importance of progress in human development, especially the alleviation of extreme poverty, the promotion of economic and social justice, judicial reform, the promotion and safeguarding of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for minorities and the satisfaction of the basic needs of the most vulnerable groups among the peoples in the region, issues which have been a primary source of tension and conflict and which deserve to be discussed with the same urgency and dedication as was the case in the settlement of armed conflicts,

Considering with concern that it has not yet been possible to overcome the devastating effects of Hurricanes Mitch and Keith on certain countries of the region, which are causing setbacks in the progress made by the peoples and Governments of Central America, a situation aggravated by the earthquakes in El Salvador and the drought afflicting the entire region in 2001, especially in Honduras and Nicaragua,

Emphasizing the solidarity of the international community with the victims of Hurricane Mitch, as demonstrated by the Stockholm Declaration,[5] the subsequent meetings of the regional Consultative Group for the Transformation and Modernization of Central America and in particular by the meeting of the Group held in Madrid in March 2001, at which the requirements of the Central American countries affected by natural disasters, including the earthquakes in El Salvador early in 2001, were considered,

Bearing in mind the efforts made by the Central American Governments to reduce the risks and mitigate the consequences of natural disasters in the region, as demonstrated by the adoption, by the Presidents of the Isthmus, of the Declaration of Guatemala II of 19 October 1999,[6] the subsequent adoption of the Strategic Framework for the Reduction of Vulnerability and Disasters in Central America, as well as the adoption of the Central American Five-Year Plan for the Reduction of Vulnerability to and the Impact of Disasters, 2000 to 2004,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;[7]

2. *Commends* the efforts of the peoples and the Governments of the Central American countries to re-establish peace and democracy throughout the region and promote sustainable development by implementing the commitments adopted at the summit meetings in the region, and supports the decision of the Presidents that Central America should become a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development;

3. *Reaffirms* the need to continue to improve the electoral processes that have been taking place in Central America, which are conducive to the consolidation of democracy in the region;

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[4] See CD/1478.

[5] See www.iadb.org.

[6] A/54/630, annex.

[7] A/56/416.

4. *Recognizes* the need to continue to follow closely the situation in Central America according to the objectives and principles established in the Stockholm Declaration[5] in order to support national and regional efforts to overcome the underlying causes that have led to armed conflicts, avoid setbacks and consolidate peace and democratization in the area and promote the objectives of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America;[2]

5. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the results of the meeting of the regional Consultative Group for the Transformation and Modernization of Central America, held in Madrid in March 2001, in order to continue to help to consolidate the transformation and modernization of Central America through the implementation of measures to reform and harmonize the legislation and institutions of the region, and through specific development projects;

6. *Reaffirms* the importance of the Puebla-Panama Plan as a means of promoting the economic and social development of the Mesoamerican region; in that connection, it recognizes the progress made in implementing the Plan and invites the friendly countries of the Mesoamerican region, international agencies and international businessmen and investors to support the Mesoamerican countries in the implementation of the projects prioritized in the Plan,

7. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Government of El Salvador to deal effectively with the requirements deriving from the earthquakes in that country early in 2001;

8. *Welcomes* the valuable and speedy response of the international community to the serious natural disasters which have affected the region, in particular the earthquakes in El Salvador early in 2001, which demonstrates the permanent solidarity that unites the peoples of the world; it also urges the cooperating international community to continue making the necessary contributions to supplement national efforts to reconstruct the country;

9. *Welcomes* the Declaration of Guatemala II[6] which provides for the necessary measures to prevent vulnerability to and mitigate the effects of natural disasters;

10. *Also welcomes* the progress achieved in implementing the Guatemala Peace Agreements, calls upon all parties to take further measures to implement the commitments in the Peace Agreements, in particular with regard to the Fiscal Pact, the Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the recommendation of the Clarification Commission and urges all sectors of society to combine efforts and work with courage and determination to consolidate peace;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General, the bodies and programmes of the United Nations system and the international community to continue to support and verify in Guatemala the implementation of all the peace agreements signed under United Nations auspices, compliance with which is an essential condition for a firm and lasting peace in that country, and to consider the implementation of the Peace Agreements as the framework for their technical and financial assistance programmes and projects, stressing the importance of constant and close cooperation among them in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Guatemala;

12. *Expresses its appreciation with satisfaction* to the people and the Government of El Salvador for their successful efforts to fulfil the commitments set forth in the Peace Agreements, which has made a substantial contribution to the strengthening of the process of democratization in that country;

13. *Recognizes* the importance of the Central American Integration System as the body set up to coordinate and harmonize efforts to achieve integration, and calls upon the international community, the United Nations system and other international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, to extend effective cooperation with a view to improving the competence and efficiency of the Integration System in the fulfilment of its mandate;

14. *Underlines* the efforts carried out in the Central American region towards integration, such as the Trinational Declaration between Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, as well as the Customs Union between those countries, as means for promoting integration while respecting different stages of development, through a pragmatic mechanism open to the participation of the other countries of the region; underlines also the most recent progress in the form of the frontier post in Peñas Blancas, Nicaragua, common to four countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua), which became operational in October 2001; this customs unification, involving twelve frontier posts, entailed bilateral, trinational and quadrinational unifications;

15. *Encourages* the Central American Governments to continue to carry out their historic responsibilities by fully implementing the commitments they have assumed under national, regional or international agreements, especially the agreements for the promotion and safeguarding of human rights, and the commitments to implement the social programme to overcome poverty and unemployment, establish a more just and equitable society, improve public safety, strengthen the judiciary, consolidate a modern and transparent public administration and eliminate corruption, impunity, acts of terrorism and drug and arms trafficking, all of which are necessary and urgent measures for consolidating a firm and lasting peace in the region;

16. *Reiterates its deep appreciation* to the Secretary-General, his special representatives, the groups of countries for the peace processes in El Salvador (Colombia, Mexico, Spain, United States of America and Venezuela), and Guatemala (Colombia, Mexico, Norway, Spain, United States of America and Venezuela), to the Support Group for Nicaragua (Canada, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden), to the European Union and to other countries that have contributed significantly and to the international community in general for its support and solidarity in the building of peace, democracy and development in Central America;

17. *Reaffirms* the importance of international cooperation, in particular cooperation with the bodies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and the donor community in the new stage of consolidating firm and lasting peace and democracy in Central America, and urges them to continue to support Central American efforts to achieve those goals;

18. *Notes with satisfaction* the firm determination of the Central American Governments to settle their disputes through peaceful means, thereby avoiding any setback in the efforts to consolidate firm and lasting peace in the region;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to lend his full support to the initiatives and activities of the Central American Governments, particularly their efforts to consolidate peace and democracy through the promotion of integration and the implementation of the comprehensive sustainable development programme, emphasizing, inter alia, the potential repercussions of natural disasters, in particular the persisting effects of hurricane Mitch, for the peace processes and the vulnerable economies of the region, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution;

20. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session the item entitled "The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development".